

The Overcrowded Professions.

Statistics indicate that there is one physician in the United States to every 200 inhabitants, or one to every hundred families. Some who have looked into the subject say that the number of persons who have need of a physician does not exceed eight or ten for each 1,000 of the population, but this estimate is undoubtedly much too low, as the annual death rate is larger than the proportion here given, and the grim remark, that those who die have medical or surgical assistance, is a statement of an almost universal truth. To those who are assisted out of the world must also be added a large proportion of those who are assisted into it, and taking both classes of cases into consideration, not less than thirty to every 1,000 people have in each year need of a physician. Added to these perhaps twice as large a number of individuals have occasion, once or often a year, to call for professional services for bodily ailments, so that the aggregate of the population included in the annual visiting and office lists of the doctors reaches 100 for every 1,000 persons in the United States, or the equivalent of one case for every two families in the United States. In many of these cases there is but one visit; in others the attention is unremitting; in many there is no compensation, or but a trifling one; in others the service is highly remunerated. Take it all through, from the data at hand, \$10 may fairly be taken as fully the average return which each patient makes to his medical attendant, and 500 is, therefore, fully up to the sum which each physician would annually receive if professional services were paid into a common fund and divided per capita among the doctors. But if the number of patients per doctor were twice as large as is here estimated, or if the average sum paid for attendance upon each case were double the figure given, the average annual income of the physicians of the United States would be but 1,000 each. This is a very liberal estimate of the fair expectation of a doctor who shall reach an average in his profession—that is, one who shall not only be "average" in ability, but who shall have attained the average experience in his profession, which ordinarily is the result of many years of work. Of the income a doctor of unusual expenses must be met, and the net sum which can be applied to the support of the physician and his family is necessarily reduced. Thousands of medical men have an income largely above the average here stated; but the excess in their case involves a diminution in the amount which other less successful or less able physicians receive, so that many thousands must get along with a gross income considerably below \$1,000.

The average member of the legal profession is not as well off as the average doctor. The ranks of the lawyers are even more formidable, in proportion to the business upon which they make their onslaught, than are those of the doctors. The doctor, too, has a great advantage over the lawyer, in the fact that patient waiting on his part will ultimately result in a greater or less number of patients waiting on him. A man often must have the first doctor at hand; but if he has any means he can take his choice among the lawyers, so that one of the latter, unless he has marked ability of some description available in his profession, will have a more tedious time of waiting for clients than the doctor has in waiting for patients. As a partial offset to this, the lawyer has greater opportunities to make business for himself, but the volume which he can thus turn up is comparatively small and hardly worth considering.

It is largely the fault of the professions themselves that they are overcrowded. It cannot be denied that, in comparison with other countries, the United States have an extraordinarily large number of quacks and shysters. We have in this country doctors and lawyers as eminent as those of any in the world; but we have also a "rag, tag and bobtail" of both professions a collection that is a disgrace to us. It is safe to say that seven-tenths of the lawyers and one-half of the doctors could drop out of the professions to-morrow with scarcely a perceptible weakening in the ability of the professions, and that the public would be gainers by the loss.

Forced to Run.
Edward Wise, the original rock-and-roll entertainer, relates one of his recent experiences to a reporter of the New York Sun. Some persons are public-spirited enough to wish that every one of this tribe of out-door dancers could also be accommodated with a ticket to the penitentiary.

I had a warm time one day near Annapolis. I found a low house, built against the gable end of a barn, and got the house to point "Tut's Pills" on a sign. I was working away nicely in the "S" when the farmer saw me and ordered me away.
I tried to reason with him, but he was too stubborn to conviction. I had to go; but I didn't come far when I thought what a pity it was that the sign wasn't finished, and then I concluded to go back and finish it.
I was working away on the last "L" when the farmer saw me again. He insisted upon me getting right down. I paid no attention to him, finished the "L," and began on the "S" as if there was no one within a thousand miles.
"Oh, you won't stop, will you?" called the farmer. "Well, we'll see!" and he rushed into the little house on which I stood, and began thumping around at a great rate.
"What's he up to?" thought I, and I began to shade the "S." I soon found out, for just then, he came out and stood in the left ear, and another pabbled me in the cheek, and before I knew it, about a million of them were around my head.
I didn't wait to make the period. I just finished that "S" in a hurry, picked up my paint-pot, and started in double-quick time.
"I thought I'd stop you!" yelled the farmer after me.
I thought he had. The house was a one-shot, and he was up on the eaves, I had hard work to get rid of the bees, and had to keep mud on my cheek and ear all that afternoon to keep the swelling down.

The Illinois Journal says that there was in Schuyler county a young-old man, who, without apparent cause, living placidly on a farm, has in eighteen years passed through the physical change of from youth to old age. At the age of 6 he had all the development of strength and muscle usually in a lad of 15. At 12 his hair was brown and gray hairs appeared. Now at 18, he is as decrepit as an old man of 80, and seems tottering on the verge of the grave.

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